

and it is committed to ensure that this happens. For most parents who have been separated from their children for years, this will certainly be an enormous relief.

I completely agree that abducted children deserve more than rhetoric, which is what most left-behind parents have had to contend with. Hopefully, the German authorities will keep their word and take some positive action to ensure that left-behind parents gain access to their children.

Nobody implies that courts in the United States are perfect, but this does not absolve the German authorities of their responsibilities to allow non-German parents to see their children. As the German embassy rightly pointed out, Germany is not the only country that has a poor record in returning abducted or illegally retained children to their country of origin.

Most left-behind parents are left without any enforceable access rights. This cannot be allowed to continue. We must bring Ludwig Koons and all of our children home.

WELFARE REFORM PRINCIPLES

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President of the United States outlined the principles for the reauthorization of welfare in America.

Many years ago, Ronald Reagan spoke of the purpose of welfare, saying, it is not simply to provide for the needy but more than that, to salvage these, our fellow citizens, to make them self-sustaining and as quickly as possible independent of welfare.

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I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to extol my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and the previous administration for enacting the welfare reform laws of 1996. They have been an unqualified success. Half of all welfare recipients got real jobs since that day and age.

Welfare reform has lifted 2.3 million children out of poverty; and, since 1996, we have actually reversed a decades-old explosion of out-of-wedlock births, recognizing that a marriage is the best environment for escaping poverty and building strong and healthy and well-balanced children.

Let us stay the course. Let us keep the purpose of welfare, so adequately described by President Reagan, and measure welfare success not by how many people arrive on welfare but by how many people leave it.

VETERANS COPAY FOR PRESCRIPTIONS

(Mr. STRICKLAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, we oftentimes speak glowingly in here of

our respect for our military personnel and of our appreciation for what our veterans have done for us, but oftentimes our words are inconsistent with our behavior.

Many in this Chamber do not realize that just a few weeks ago we increased the copayment for prescription drugs that veterans must pay for these needed medications from \$2 to \$7 a prescription. Many veterans receive over 10 prescriptions a month. Ten times \$7 is \$70 a month. Many get a 3-month supply at one time. That is a cost of \$210.

I have introduced H.R. 2820, which will return the copay from \$7 back to \$2 and will freeze it at that level for 5 years. This is the least we can do for those who have served our country so nobly.

MARRIAGE: A WOMAN'S SAFETY ISSUE

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, preserving and strengthening marriage in America is not just a values issue, it is a safety issue, especially for women. According to Federal statistics, women are much more likely to be victims of domestic abuse if they are not married.

In fact, domestic partner or spouse abuse against women is almost three times as high among cohabiting couples as it is among all married, divorced, and separated couples combined. If we simply compare married couples to couples who just live together, violence against women is five times as high for those who are not married.

Clearly, women are safest when they are living in healthy, committed marriages. To most Americans, this sounds like common sense, but for the most at-risk women in America, I mean poor women, our welfare laws create a strong disincentive against marriage. Mr. Speaker, that needs to change.

I hope that when we reauthorize our welfare laws later this year that we will address this. America's families and America's women deserve no less.

CONGRESS SHOULD NOT ENDORSE DECEPTIVE SENIOR GROUPS

(Mr. KLECZKA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill in response to the deceptive tactics of a group that preys on our senior citizens. The Retired Enlisted Association's Senior Citizen League, or TREA, as it is called, has repeatedly targeted seniors with deceptive "Notch" mailings in an attempt to extort millions of dollars from these seniors.

This is a scam. TREA is telling seniors that they are working to correct a problem that does not exist in an at-

tempt to bilk the elderly out of their hard-earned money. From 1997 to 2000, this group raked in over \$46 million.

Because of these tactics, today I am introducing the Senior Protection Act, which would revoke TREA's Federal charter, a distinction given to groups with a patriotic, charitable, or educational mandate. Their deceptive tactics reflect none of these characteristics.

Congress can no longer turn a blind eye to TREA's fund-raising schemes which exploit our seniors. Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to join me and cosponsor this necessary legislation.

IMPORTANCE OF MARRIAGE

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to affirm the importance of strong marriages in America. A strong marriage is the foundation for a strong family. Strong families, in turn, are fundamental to the pursuit of stronger communities and a stronger Nation.

There are numerous studies and statistics that document how critical it is for children to have a mother and a father dedicated to each other. If we genuinely desire to do what is right for our children, we must work to ensure that every child has the guidance that a strong marriage provides.

As convincing as the statistics are, I know these principles to be true based upon my own experience. My wife Anne and I have been married for 33 wonderful years. Our four children are living examples of what a strong marriage can provide. While we are far from perfect, I have seen firsthand the incredible results of a strong marriage.

We must continue to support measures that encourage and strengthen this sacred institution.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN STEINBECK

(Mr. FARR of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to address the House regarding the centennial of the birth of one of our greatest American writers, John Steinbeck.

John Steinbeck brought honor to the United States as a distinguished writer and endured criticism and suspicion for his progressive ideas and the themes of his novels, short stories, and essays. His work reflects deeply the compassionate view of America and Americans.

John Steinbeck promoted a greater understanding of the lives of people who experienced difficult economic times, war, the fulfillment of scientific study, the value of hard labor, the difficulties and joys of the bonds within families and between friends.